

Announces Initial Approval of Hudson Valley Agricultural Development Corporation Investment to Implement Three Initiatives, Create Dozens of Jobs

Stone Ridge, NY - Grow it in the Hudson Valley; that's the message Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) delivered today as he stood with farmers, local officials and representatives from the Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation (HVADC) to outline three new cutting edge initiatives designed to help local farmers move their products to lucrative markets in New York City and beyond. In order to support the initiatives, Hinchey announced he has secured approval by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services of a \$205,000 investment to build on the success of the HVADC and help implement the new initiatives.

"Our local farmers have a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of the growing demand for local produce and agricultural products in the New York City metropolitan area, right here in the Hudson Valley, and beyond," said Hinchey who secured a major federal investment last year to support the creation of the HVADC. "The Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation is helping to create dozens of new jobs for farmers to capitalize on that opportunity. They have a clear plan in place to build on the success and momentum they have already generated, and now I've secured initial approval of the federal investment needed to bring those plans to fruition."

"The new federal investment will help us to expand partnerships in the community and provide seed money for several new initiatives that are designed to create new jobs in the region, increase net returns to the farm, expand local food availability to the broader New York marketplace, and encourage a return to farming for our youth," said Todd Erling, Executive Director of HVADC.

The first initiative, Hudson Valley Bounty, will help farmers connect with retailers and restaurants by providing joint educational programming with farmers, retail buyers and chefs. The non-profit will help support the adoption of world class food safety standards. The Bounty program expects to help farmers retain local agricultural jobs through its food safety programs while increasing employment in the farm and distribution sectors.

The second initiative, Hudson Valley Incubator Kitchen, will be a joint effort of HVADC and Farm to Table Co-packers designed to provide technical assistance and access to flexible food manufacturing and logistics capacity to farmers and agribusinesses in the Hudson Valley. The incubator kitchen is expected to work with up to 20 new businesses a year and expects to lead to the creation of 30 new jobs.

The third initiative, Hudson Valley Agribusiness Incubator Fund, will seed the development of a capital services program targeting small and emerging agribusinesses. On a region-wide basis, this program can help to create more than 65 jobs and leverage as much as \$10 million in additional public funds and private investment capital. These projects are also an expansion of the “food corridor” concept to the entire Hudson Valley Region and New York City metropolitan region.

Hinchey helped boost the efforts of the HVADC with a \$350,000 he secured as part of the Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations bill. That investment, combined with additional public and private resources, has been able to support a range of agribusiness projects focused on developing a viable food industry cluster in the Hudson River Valley. Most notably, the HVADC was able to use the investment Hinchey secured to support the start-up of Farm-to-Table Co-packers in Kingston, NY. According to HVADC, since June of 2010, Farm-to-Table has created 22 new jobs in Ulster County, working with 30 farmers to pack products and 20 private businesses as co-packing clients. The company expects to hire an additional 14 workers in the next year.